

## DESIGNING TASK-BASED SPEAKING MATERIALS USING AUTHENTIC TEXT: LEARNER AUTONOMY

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### ABSTRACT

*The roles of learners in language teaching are not only the receiver of the information but also the providers, collaborators, and decision-makers. In this case, the learners can provide and collaborate with the teacher to decide what materials and language competences the learners need to learn and achieve. Thus, the learning materials and tasks should represent the students' needs that facilitate them to use the language in the real world. One of the materials that need to take into account is an authentic text. Authentic text as informational input for interested participants, for building interpersonal relationship between the interested participants, and for communicating meaning (Widodo: 2012). In line with this, the students can contribute an authentic text to be designed for interactive speaking task. The interactive speaking task I propose: comprehending the text, making power point presentation from the text, explaining (playing a role as a speakers and participants in the seminar), responding to the explanation (questioning and answering). To design the material and the task using authentic text has to consider the eight principles as the basic theoretical framework for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) materials design.*

**Keywords:** *Learner autonomy, task, authentic text, ESP*

### Introduction

Providing appropriate definitions to learners' autonomy is not as easy as we might think. This definition varies from different perspective. It has been conceptualized from technical, psychological, and political perspective (Benson 1997, as cited in Borg and Al Busaidi: 2012). From technical perspective point of view, it focuses on the physical setting of learning (often outside formal educational context). In other word, it is condition where the place is more flexible, interesting, relax, and meaningful. Meanwhile, from a physical perspective is concerned with the mental attributes that permit autonomy. Then, from political perspective, it focuses on issues of power and control. Generally speaking, those who has power will lead and control the situation. In addition, from a socio-cultural perspective it is a central interest in the roles of interaction and social participation in the development of learner autonomy.

In this paper, I position learners as the actor. In the other words, a learner has more chances to play the role in the class than the lecturers do.

This paper will not define the learners' autonomy in details; it focuses more on misconception of learners' autonomy so that we are not far from the concept and position it in English language teaching well. According to

Esch (1998:37, as cited in Borg and Al Busaidi: 2012) as the focus of the misconceptions states that:

*It is not self-instruction/learning without a teacher;... it does not mean that intervention or initiative on the part of a teacher is banned;... it is not something teachers do to learners; i.e. a new methodology;... it is not a single easily identifiable behavior;... it is not a steady state achieved by learners once and for all.*

From this explanation, it can be pointed out that it is not free -learning, the role of teacher is mainly needed especially for the school whose students are low. It may happen because of incomplete facilities, incompetence teachers, economic condition, parents' support. It is a complex matter.

Meanwhile, According to Little (1991, as cited in Yang: 2005) points out 4 misconceptions of learner autonomy:

- It is not synonymous with self-instruction; that it is essentially a matter of deciding to learn without a teacher;
  - It is not a teaching method;
  - It is not easily described behavior;
- And it is not a steady state achieved by certain learners.

These misconceptions also suggest the same point as the previous one that learner autonomy is not exactly the same as self-

instruction. In the other word, the learners still need the teachers to help them learn what they are going to learn because it is curriculum based. Do the students understand the curriculum, more specifically syllabus?. In this paper, teacher/lecture position himself as guide, instructor, facilitator in completing the learners' task that make them more autonomous.

### **Authentic Text and Task by Definition**

In language learning, understanding the text is a key point. Thus defining a text is needed to take into account. Bloor and Bloor (2004, cited in Widodo: 2014) define a 'text' as 'any stretch of language, regardless of length, that is spoken or written for the purposes of communication by real people in actual circumstances. in short, text contains a particular message that can be used to facilitate social interaction.

Widodo (2012, as cited in Widodo: 2014) contends that texts are manifested through different modes different modes (e.g., visual and verbal), genres (e.g., traffic lights), registers (e.g., traffic communication), and forms (e.g., traffic signs). This argument implies that texts are presented multimodally and convey social meaning and function in a certain situation.

In line with the idea above, text used in economic class majoring management can be classified into English for specific purposes. This kind of text according to Widodo (2014) contain particular communicative purposes (e.g., informative, instructive, persuasive, procedural), linguistic features (e.g., the use of tense, modality, and discourse markers), organizational features (e.g., deductive positioning and inductive positioning), rhetorical moves (e.g., introduction, body, and conclusion, attitudinal stances (e.g., optimistic, promising, promotional), and genres (e.g., biographies or short stories).

To be more focus, I will present an authentic text which is the core of this paper in task-based speaking material.

### **2.1 Authentic Text**

Authentic materials or texts are a vital component of task based language learning and teaching (TBLLT) in that learners are required to produce real-world language expressions in order to successfully complete a

certain task (Widodo: 2012). Meanwhile, Gilmore (2007, as cited in Widodo, 2012:248) argues that the notion of authenticity " can be situated in either the text itself, in the participants, in the social or cultural situation and purpose of the communicative act, or some combination of these.

Gilmore (2007, as cited in Widodo, 2012:248) states that authentic texts provide students with "a much richer source of input in the classroom and have the potential to raise learners awareness of a wide range of discourse features. In other words, any text which is rich of input or information in the classroom and potentially raise the learners awareness can be claimed as an authentic text. In addition, raising learners awareness cannot be separated from interesting, relevant, and challenging text. Widodo (2012) states that authentic text as informational input for interested participants, for building interpersonal relationship between the interested participants, and for communicating meaning. Referring to the definition above, I make the combination that come to final definition used in this paper that is any text that is rich of input or information in the classroom and potentially raise the learners awareness used to build relationship between the participants for meaningful communicative purposes.

### **2.2 Task**

Moving to the next point that is "task", Bygate, Skehan and Swain (2001) offer the following 'basic all-purpose' definition of tasks in language pedagogy: 'a task is an activity which requires learners to use language, with an emphasis on meaning in order to attain an objective' (11). Drawing analogy that a task is the work that you must complete with the tool (language). In earlier definition, Skehan (1998) described language-learning tasks with reference to four criteria:

*meaning is primary;*  
*there is some sort of relationship to the real world;*  
*task complexity has some priority;*  
*the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome. (95)*

Referring to first criteria above that meaning is primary, it reflects the effect of learning on the use of the language. Secondly, the task that students work on should have connection to the real world. To give you an example, the

students learn phrases “asking for and giving opinion”. One day, a tourist come to their place, the learners can ask the tourist about their place. Next, task complexity has some priority. It can be implied that complexity need to be considered. In addition, complexity must be in line with the level of the students. The more complex the task the more difficult to learn, the more difficult to learn a task the higher level the students must be. Moreover, the last, the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome. It is obvious that to measure the students’ performance on the task simply by take a look at the task out come. More importantly and autonomously, assessing this performance can be done both the teacher and students (self/peer assessment).

### **Designing Task-Based Speaking Material Using Authentic Text**

In designing materials, teachers need to take into account what the guiding principles they apply. The following is the eight guiding principles of ESP material design adopted from Widodo (2010):

**Principle 1:** Teaching materials should have a clear set of learning goals and objectives. Generally speaking it refers to the competence that students require to achieve.

**Principle 2:** Teaching materials should contain learning tasks, which allow for students’ schemata or background knowledge or experience activation. This second principle relates to the students background knowledge or their current experiences. This is very important to facilitate learning. It can be used as a stimulant to raise their confidence to engage.

**Principle 3:** Learning tasks in the materials should allow students to explore their specialized needs and interests. In this case, the materials given to the learners must be specialized needs and interests. It means that the students learn the materials because the need it. For example, students learn “how to advertise a product successfully” because they need to advertise the product where they work or they need to advertise their own product. This need makes the learning more interesting.

**Principle 4:** Learning tasks in the materials should enable students to develop their language skills for authentic communication and content competence. It means that the learning tasks in the materials should promotes any activities that develop their lan-

guage skills covering reading, speaking, listening, and writing. In addition, Widodo (2010) states that the language skills here are not only covering speaking, listening, reading, and writing but also including linguistic ability.

**Principle 5:** In the materials, learning tasks should integrate language skills emphasized. In other word, the material should promote the learning tasks, which integrate language skills as obviously mentioned above because it completes each other.

**Principle 6:** Learning tasks in the materials should be as authentic as possible. In addition Widodo (2010) states that idea implies that learning tasks should reflect real-life tasks that people do in daily interpersonal interactions

**Principle 7:** Teaching materials should have impact on learner language development. What is meant by impact here is that learners should acquire a particular skill or sub-skill through a set of learning tasks or activities designed by a teacher (Widodo:2010)

**Principle 8:** Teaching materials should inform what roles learners and teachers play in and out the classroom. In the last part of this principle refers to the role of learners and teacher where the learners can play a role as collaborator, informant, navigator, etc. Meanwhile, teachers can play as facilitator, guide, provider, instructor, etc).

### **3.1 Designing Task-Based Speaking Materials in Action**

In this paper, I will focus on the use of authentic text that is designed for interactive speaking task. Again I emphasize that authentic here means any text which is rich of input or information in the classroom and potentially raise the learners awareness. Because of the wide ranges of topics, I propose one major topic as the sample namely Marketing Mix. This topic is determined based on the syllabus and the teaching contract that have been agreed to run for one semester.

This material is specifically designed for speaking although it integrally relates to reading and writing activities. This materials cover activating the students schemata, pre-speaking, while-speaking, and post-speaking activities. The followings are the details of the processes.

### A. Activating the students schemata (Leading Questions)

1. Do you ever meet people market the prod-

No	Statement	Agreeing/ disagreeing	Reason
1.	Marketing is the same as selling	.....	.....
2.	Business without marketing is	.....	.....
3.	The goods must be in the right place at the right time	.....	.....
4.	The price of a product is affordable	.....	.....
5.	People look for value of a product	.....	.....
	Etc....		

- uct?  
 2. Where do you meet him/her/them?  
 3. What does/do he/she/they tell you about?  
 4. How does/do he/she/they market the product?  
 5. Are you interested in buying the product? Why?  
 6. What makes marketing run well?  
 7. What are the common problems of marketing?  
 8. Is communication playing a pivotal role in marketing

This activity aims at relating the students prior knowledge or experience. As mentioned in the principle 2, this activity can give stimulus on the topic that is going to learn. From this stimulus, response from the students is highly appreciated. It is very important to facilitate learning.

### Pre-Speaking (Lexical-input)

Task 1: In group, give your response to the following statement. Support your response with reason and give example or illustration.

### Table 1. Expressing Agreement and Disagreement

The objective of this task is to familiarize the students with the expression used in the speaking activities later on. It covers agreeing and disagreeing, reasoning, and supporting opinion (e.g., give example). It is expected to facilitate the students to agree or disagree, give the reasons, and example so that the interactive speaking activity in while-speaking (seminar/presentation) is achieved.

Task 2. In group, give your opinion to the following questions. Support your opinion/answer with reason and give example or illustration.

### Table 2. Asking and Giving Opinion

The goal of this task is the same as in task 1 that is to familiarize the students with the expression so that it can promote interactive speaking in questions and answers session.

Task 3. In group, match the stages with appropriate phrases/sentences on the right!

This task is given under consideration that the students know the structure commonly used in the formal meeting like presentation, seminar or workshop. The learners get to know what phrases/sentence/expression used to greet audience, state the subject, structure the talk, etc. This can guideline the students in making power point presentation so that it can carried out successfully and systematically.

Task 4. In group, search for Business Website that you are interested in and browse/download the topic of Marketing. Then discuss the topic in group and make an outline of your presentation. With your friends in the group make power points presentation not more than 10 slides. You may specify the topic such as: the importance of marketing, factors affecting marketing, etc...you may also read from several sources.

Beginning of presentation	
Structure	Phrases/sentences
1.Greeting audience	Ladies and gentlemen...
2.Stating the subject/topic	I've divided my talk into three parts..
3.Structuring your presentation	My talk will take about 30 minutes.
4.Stating the length of the presentation	After my talk there'll be time for a discussion and any questions.
5.Stating that audience can interrupt/question	The theme of my presentation is...
The Middle Presentation	
1.Ending the introduction	Now let's move to the first part of my talk, which is about...
2.Beginning the main body/topic (Power Point Presentation)	That's all for the introduction
3.Listing the topic	That's all I want to say for now on...
4.Linking: Ending part of the main body	There are two kinds/things to consider. First,... second..., third....
	Let's move to the next part which is...

No	Questions	Opinion	Reason
1.	In your opinion, what is marketing?	.....	.....
2.	What is your opinion about promotion?	.....	.....
3.	Which one is more important between price and quality?	.....	.....
4.	Do you think a place affect a buyer?	.....	.....
5.	Do you think expensive products always take longer time?	.....	.....
6.	What is your opinion about online marketing? Is it more effective than manual marketing?	.....	.....
	Etc.....		

<b>Ending the Presentation</b>	
1.Ending the main body of the presentation	Right...that ends my talk I would like to finish with a summary of main point There are two conclusions/recommendations...first... second... Now, we have 1 hour for questions and discussions.
2.Beginning the summary or conclusion	
3.Concluding the presentation	
4.Inviting questions/discussion	

Table 4. Outlining the presentation

No	Part	Detail
1.	Topic	
2.	Subtopic	
3.	First part	
4.	Second part	
5.	Third part	
6.	Summary/ conclusion	

This task aims at guiding the students in making power point presentation and determine which are included and not included in the presentation. Since it is not the only guidelines, the students can use other guidelines which is considered more effective in practice. This can be done in or outside the classroom (learners' house). In addition, the purpose of this is sharing the information from the authentic text they get from. Then comprehend and come to the conclusion which information/items are included and not. This is a problem solving or brainstorming activities. It can build the students personal relationship.

**While speaking (the core of speaking activities)**

Task 6. Present your presentation based on the power point you made.

Situation 1(speaker): You are invited to the seminar to talk about marketing.

**In the beginning:** you greet audience, state the subject/topic, structure your presentation, state the length of the presentation, state that audience can interrupt/question, end the introduction.

**In the middle:** you begin the main body/topic (Power Point Presentation) you list the topic, end part of the main body, link to begin a new part, end the main body of the presentation,

**In the end:** You begin the summary or conclusion and conclude the presentation.

The goal of this activity is to practice the students' speaking skills it can also train students to handle presentation or seminar effectively. Particularly speaking, it can be used as a mean to comprehend, share, exchange information, and assess the students performance.

**Task: 7. Play the role for the following situation.**

Speaker Situation	Participant Situation
After you conclude the presentation now invite questions/discussion from the participants.	Participant A: You have your own opinion. You don't agree to one of the speaker's statement/explanation. Express your disagreement.
Speaker : You clarify/repeat your explanation that the participant has his own opinion. Then you support your opinion with example/facts.	Participant A: You agree to what speaker explained and thank the speaker.
Speaker: Reply the thank. You ask the other participants if they have a question/comment.	Participant B: You ask the speaker's opinion about the recent issues on marketing.
Speaker : You give your own opinion about the recent issues on marketing	Participant B : You still don't catch what the speaker means. You say sorry.
Speaker : You explain again. Try to ensure the participant with your answer by supporting your opinion with some facts.	Participant B: You don't catch the speaker's intention. You ask for clarification.
Speaker : You response patiently and motivate him to keep studying. You invite the last questioner to ask or give comment.	Participant C: This time, you have your point of view about the marketing itself. You give your own opinion to the speaker.

Speaker : You thank for the argument and explain in depth about the marketing by quoting statements from two to three experts on marketing.	Participant C: You Agree to what the speaker say. You thank the the speaker.
Speaker : Reply the thank. You thank the participants on their pay attention. You feel very excited on their performance and also thank the committee. You close the meeting.	All participants: Response the parting...

**The aims of this task are:**

Students can apply the language expression they learn covering asking and giving opinion, showing agreement and disagreement, asking for clarification, and supporting opinion. Through this activity it is expected to facilitate interactive speaking activity.

**D. Post-speaking**

Task 8. Give your objective assessment on your friends' performance by putting a tick to the following questionnaire

**Table 6. Example of pair-assessment**

This post-speaking task covers/ functions as evaluation or assessment of the students' performance. It can be done by both teacher and learners (self/peer assessment). It can be in the form of checklist which contain the criteria used to measure the students competences.

Statement	Criteria			
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Bad
Ability to open the presentation				
Ability to introduce the topic				
Ability to explain the material				
Ability to conclude the material				
Ability to handle the presentation				
Ability to answer and response the questions or comment				
Etc.....				

**Conclusion**

This part points out the material design of ESP material that is badly needed for some areas of subject especially economic majoring management. It also covers four main roles of teacher, learners, task and authentic text in English language teaching. Thus positioning teacher as guide, facilitator, and even collaborator promote the students' learning autonomy. Second, the learners are more interested to learn and use the language since they have more autonomous roles to learn the language. It is indicated from the topic they learn which has relation to their study and background knowledge that facilitate language learning. Meanwhile from the task designed can stimulate the students to develop their language skills. From the authentic point of view, it can be designed as an interactive speaking tasks/materials. In addition, it can be used to broaden the students comprehension on the topic in which content as a main focus (content-based).

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